

ENGL 3340 Mythology

Dr. Amy Smith

Tues & Thurs 2:20-3:40

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Course Description

In this junior-level course, we will learn about several aspects of mythology. Mythology as a term suggests both myths of various cultures and the scholarly study of myth. Our course will address both of these aspects. This course is organized around a central question that mythologists have fruitfully struggled with for millennia: *What is Myth?*

In trying to answer this question, we will follow two practices of professional mythologists: we will study several cultural myth systems comparatively, and we will study several prominent theories of myth criticism and practice applying them. Near the end of the semester each of you will attempt to answer this question for yourselves in a long paper. We may never have studied myth in an academic context, and may therefore believe that we are not influenced by any theories of myth. But, in fact, many of these theories have seeped into our cultural consciousness and inform our assumptions about myth without our knowing it. If we are unaware that there are many approaches to myth, each with its own limitations and strengths, and each produced by a particular historical period, social situation and personality, then we may believe that our inherited, yet unconscious, beliefs about myth are "truth."

Our study of cultural myth systems will supplement our study of Classical Myth in our textbook. Trying to cover all world myth in one semester is beyond my capacities and, I believe, unwise. Therefore, you will research other cultural myth systems in research teams. This research will be presented at a Public Research Showcase near the end of the semester where you will have the opportunity to teach the public about your team's cultural mythology. This project provides you the opportunity to practice the skills that are required in the workplace: creating engaging public presentations and demonstrations, and working productively in a team toward a common professional goal. A video of the 2013 showcase can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWHxqfvt_DM&feature=youtu.be

Required Textbook

Classical Mythology: Images and Insights. 6th edition. Edited by Gloria Platzner and Stephen L. Harris McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0073407526

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will apply several theoretical approaches within myth studies in their interpretation of myth and Classical literature.
2. Students will know the basic contours of Greek myth and be able to analyze that myth from multiple angles.
3. Students will understand another world mythology in detail and will perform comparative analysis of world mythology.
4. Students will practice literary analysis skills and summary skills.
5. Students will compose coherent, logically organized literary analysis papers.
6. Students will compose responsible research papers that incorporate a few well-understood sources and employ MLA format correctly.
7. Students will create effective presentations of their knowledge for peers utilizing oral and visual presentation skills.

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Workload and Grading

In this course, students will write **four short summary essays** about theory lectures and **short analytic essays** in which they apply theoretical perspectives to assigned reading in mythology. Together, these essays will constitute a ‘**theory portfolio**’, which will be given one total grade. That grade will reflect a student’s improvement across the portfolio. Students will also demonstrate their analytic and writing skills in a **final paper** that draws on the theory portfolio.

There is a **group research and presentation** component of this course in which groups of students are assigned to research a particular culture’s mythology other than Greek, in order to expand our understanding of mythology and to gain a comparative perspective. Groups will present their research in a public forum. Following these presentations, each student will take an **essay exam** on the material presented in their peers’ presentations.

We will also take **reading quizzes** on Blackboard prior to some class sessions and students will be required to participate in **group work and class activities** as the semester progresses.

Reading Quizzes.....	10%
Theory Portfolio.....	30%
Group Research Project and Presentation....	30%
Presentation Exam.....	10%
Final Paper.....	20%

IMPORTANT DATES

SEPTEMBER 10: MAY DROP WITH A REFUND

SEPTEMBER 29: MAY DROP WITH NO ACADEMIC PENALTY

NOVEMBER 3: MAY DROP WITH ACADEMIC PENALTY

DECEMBER 3: LAST CLASS DAY

Policies and Rules

- Please silence and do not use your **cellphone** during class for texting, checking email, etc. I find it disrespectful to our learning environment and in the interests of our community I will enforce this policy. If you continue to use your phone during class, you may be asked to leave class and counted absent for the day.
- To be fair to students who complete their work on time, late work will receive a penalty of 10% for each class session it is late.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. If you are **late** you may be counted absent. You may not make up in-class work that you miss due to an absence. After **three absences** your course grade will be reduced.
- You must participate in the research project and presentation. However, this project allows you to set various levels of group or individual work, depending on your preferences and work style.
- I do not tolerate **cheating or plagiarism**. I am patient, kind, and friendly if you ask me questions about potential plagiarism (such as, “is this plagiarism?”). If you do not ask such questions and are caught plagiarizing, I am not so patient, kind, and friendly. I consider cheating and plagiarism disrespectful to the rest of the students who are working hard and taking the risk of turning in their own imperfect work.
- Please be professional in your online interactions with your peers and me. In your **emails**, please identify yourself and clearly state your question with the necessary detail. Please address me as Dr. Smith or Professor Smith, not [blank] or “Hey”. I will do my best to respond to your emails as quickly as possible.
- Please do not submit written work through email. I often do not have time to grade such work as soon as I get it and it subsequently gets lost in the halls of email. That is not in your best interest.
- Read the assigned work and write the papers **on time**. If you do not hand in a major assignment, you will not pass the class regardless of your average.

Unpleasantries

Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are specifically warned against all forms of cheating and plagiarism. The *Lamar University Student Handbook* clearly reads: “Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subjected to disciplinary action. Punishable offenses include, but are not limited to, cheating on an examination or academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of source materials.” One aspect of the *Handbook’s* definition of cheating includes “purchasing or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm.” Plagiarism is defined as “the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or ideas into one’s own and submitted for credit.” Faculty members in the College of arts and Sciences investigate all cases of suspected plagiarism. Any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty in this course may *receive an “F” in the course, a zero or F on the assignments, and/or will be reported to the College Dean and the Dean of Students.*

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University’s website’s homepage (www.lamar.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.

Emergency Procedures

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for severe weather or violence/active shooter, fire, or chemical release can be found at:

<http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>. Following are procedures for the first two:

Severe Weather

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
- Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

Violence/Active Shooter (CADD)

- **CALL-** 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 9-1-1 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
- **AVOID-** If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- **DENY-** Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
- **DEFEND-** Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

Course Schedule

KEY: *ITALICIZED* text indicates some identifying information about a reading assignment.

BOLD text indicates a writing assignment or exam or a chapter number.

DOUBLE UNDERLINED text indicates an aspect of your team research project.

Date	Topics and Activities	Assignments
1 (T 8/26)	Discuss Syllabus Discuss Group Project Background Knowledge Probe "What is Myth?" writing/presentations	
2 (TH 8/28)	Assign 13 terms to research for homework	DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapters 1 and 2 ("<i>Introduction to Greek Myth</i>" and "<i>Ways of Interpreting Myth</i>") in <i>Classical Mythology</i>. ➤ The 'box' entitled "<i>Has the Location of Homeric Ithaca Been Found?</i>" (in chapter 13, "A Different Kind of Hero: The Quest of Odysseus") (p. 427 in 6th edition) ➤ "Myth introductory lecture" on Blackboard
3 (T 9/2)	Discuss terms In-class activity	Research on terms DUE: (1) the Minoan civilization (and Crete); (2) the Mycenaean civilization (and Mycenae); (3) Corinth; (4) Thebes; (5) Delphi; (6) Hesiod; (7) Homer; (8) the Greek Dark Ages; (9) the Archaic Period; (10) the Classical Period; (11) Red Figure Pottery; (12) Greek Tragedy and 5th century Athens; (13) the Peloponnesian Wars
4 (TH 9/4)	Unit Two: Myth and Nature Discuss Team Research Project Assign Research Teams	DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Myth and Nature" lecture on Blackboard ➤ One-page (single-spaced) summary of lecture
5 (T 9/9)		DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 3 "In the Beginning: Hesiod's Creation Story" including the "Reading," Hesiod's "Theogony," which appears at the end of that chapter. (pp. 61-105 in 6th edition) ➤ The section of chapter 7 ("In Touch With the Gods: Apollo's Oracle at Delphi") called "<i>Apollo's Loves</i>" (p. 237 in 6th edition)
6 (TH 9/11)		DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sections of chapter 20 ("The Retelling of Greek Myths: Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>") called "<i>Ovid</i>," "<i>The Story of Creation</i>," "<i>Echo and Narcissus</i>," "<i>Apollo and Daphne</i>," and the following sections of that chapter's "Reading," (excerpts from Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>): "<i>The Creation</i>" (in Book I), "<i>The Flood</i>" (Book I), "<i>Apollo and Daphne</i>" (Book I), "<i>Echo and Narcissus</i>" (Book 3). In the 6th edition the page numbers for these are as follows: pp. 924-925, 926, 927, 932-933, 938-939, 942-950.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sections of chapter 10 ("Heroes of Myth: Man Divided Against Himself") called "<i>The Upper Limits of Human Ambition: Phaethon</i>" (pp. 305-306 in the 6th edition) ➤ READING QUIZ DUE ON BB BY 3 PM ➤ <u>Team Contracts due in class</u>
7 (T 9/16)	Work with theory application essays in class	<p>DUE:</p> <p>First theory application essay (500-800 wds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do we see nature represented in either <i>Metamorphoses</i> (one of the stories from it), <i>Theogony</i> or the story of Phaethon? Is this presentation of nature more compatible with Tylor's or Muller's view? Explain why.
8 (TH 9/18)	Unit Three: Myth and Ritual	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Myth and Ritual" lecture on Blackboard ➤ One-page (single-spaced) summary of lecture ➤ <u>Preliminary research due</u> ➤ <u>Divide up research areas for team project</u>
9 (T 9/23)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sections of chapter 5 ("The Divine Woman in Greek Mythology") called "<i>Demeter</i>," "<i>The Homeric Hymn to Demeter</i>" and the "Reading" (Author Unknown, "<i>The Homeric Hymn to Demeter</i>"). (pp. 147-167 in the 6th edition) ➤ The sections of Ovid's Metamorphoses called "<i>Orpheus and Eurydice</i>" (Book 10) and "<i>The Death of Orpheus</i>" (Book 11) (pp. 954-959 in 6th edition) ➤ Chapter 8 ("<i>Dionysus: Rooted in Earth and Ecstasy</i>") (pp. 240-258 in 6th edition) ➤ OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT HOMEWORK DUE IN CLASS
10 (TH 9/25)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 14 "Myth and Tragic Vision in the Theater of Dionysus: Euripides' Bacchae" (pp. 505-581 in 6th edition) ➤ READING QUIZ DUE ON BB BY 3 PM ➤ <u>Individuals locate research sources; inform team members</u>
11 (T 9/30)		<p>DUE:</p> <p>Second theory application essay (500-800 wds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In both "The Bacchae" and the "Homeric Hymn to Demeter" deities express their disapproval of the irreverence of humans and assert their power by either establishing rites or forcing ritual behavior (worship?). How do you think Frazer and/or Harrison would interpret this rhetoric within these texts (by "rhetoric" I mean the way that this presentation of the gods is used to produce a desired effect or to persuade the audience

		of something), especially in terms of the relationship of myth to ritual? Be sure you're getting Harrison's and Frazer's positions as well as the details of the stories right.
12 (TH 10/2)	Unit Four: Myth and Structuralism Meet with research teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Myth and Structuralism" lecture on Blackboard ➤ One-page (single-spaced) summary of lecture ➤ <u>Research team meetings</u>
13 (T 10/7)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 13 ("A Different Kind of Hero: The Quest of Odysseus") including parts of the "Reading" (read chapters 9 and 10 of the Odyssey) (pp. 424-444, 458-475 in 6th edition) ➤ Chapter 10 ("Heroes of Myth: Man Divided Against Himself") (pp. 275-306 in 6th edition)
14 (TH 10/9)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sections of chapter 20 ("The Retelling of Greek Myths: Ovid's Metamorphoses") called "<i>The Story of Lycaeon,</i>" "<i>The Flood,</i>" and "<i>Deucalion and Pyrrha</i>" (all in Book I) of Ovid's Metamorphoses (pp. 936-942 in 6th edition) ➤ The section of chapter 6 ("The Olympian Family of Zeus") called "<i>Artemis</i>" (pp. 190-193 in 6th edition) ➤ Jean-Pierre Vernant's essay called "The Figure and Function of Artemis in Myth and Cult" on Blackboard ➤ READING QUIZ DUE ON BB BY 3 PM
15 (T 10/14)		<p>DUE:</p> <p>Third theory application essay (500-800 wds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Perform a structuralist reading of one of the myths we have studied this week, discussing the binary oppositions and mediations in that myth.
16 (TH 10/16)	Unit Five: Myth and Psychology	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Myth and Psychology" lecture on Blackboard ➤ The sections of chapter 16 ("The Tragic House of Laius: Sophocles' Oedipus Cycle") called "<i>Oedipus Rex,</i>" and "<i>Reading: Sophocles' Oedipus Rex</i>" (pp. 661-670, 679-727 in 6th edition) ➤ One-page (single-spaced) summary of lecture
17 (T 10/21)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The sections of chapter 5 ("The Divine Woman in Greek Mythology") called "<i>The Great Goddess,</i>" "<i>Gaea,</i>" "<i>Hecate,</i>" and "<i>The Feminine Archetype</i>" (pp. 135-147, 152-153 of 6th edition)
18 (TH 10/23)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 11 ("Heroines of Myth: Women in Many Roles") (pp. 308-330 in 6th edition) ➤ READING QUIZ DUE ON BB BY 3 PM
19 (T 10/28)		<p>DUE:</p> <p>Fourth theory application essay (500-800 wds)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interpret one of the episodes of the <i>Odyssey</i>, or interpret some part of <i>Oedipus Rex</i>, through the lens of either psychoanalysis or archetypal criticism (this may include Otto Rank's and Joseph Campbell's approaches). Your analysis should be original; do not reproduce one of the topics from class. <p>TURN IN THE ENTIRE THEORY PORTFOLIO (including previous papers with feedback)</p>
20 (TH 10/30)	Unit Six: The Titans and Olympians	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reread <i>Hesiod's Theogony</i> (in chapter 3: "In the Beginning: Hesiod's Creation Story") (pp. 88-105 in 6th edition) ➤ Chapter 4 ("Alienation of the Human and Divine: Prometheus, Fire, and Pandora") (excluding "Reading") (pp. 106-127 in 6th edition)
21 (T 11/4)		<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 6 ("The Olympian Family of Zeus: Sharing Rule of the Universe" (excluding "Reading") (pp. 168-204 in 6th edition)
22 (TH 11/6)		<p>DUE:</p> <p>"What is Myth?" paper (at Maes 37)</p> <p>Length: 1500-2500 wds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the theories we have studied. You may choose one theory of myth that you believe is most helpful/true, or you may find a combination of theories most appropriate. In contrast, you may have developed your own interpretive approach to myth after studying the theories presented here. If you choose this last option, you must demonstrate an understanding of how your interpretive approach fits into the larger schema of myth theories as you now understand them (ie. prove that you're not just naively applying the beliefs you had before coming into this course and disregarding all other theories). • Analyze one or two myths we have studied in this course (you may include some from the research project) according to your theoretical approach (that is, demonstrate your interpretive approach by interpreting some myths). • Discuss the limitations of your interpretive approach and address these weaknesses. (Demonstrate that you understand that your approach is not universally applicable and defend why you still think it is a useful or good answer to the question of what myth is.) <p>➤ <u>Research team meetings</u></p>

23 (T 11/11)	Unit Seven: The Trojan Saga	DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chapter 12 ("Heroes at War: The Troy Saga") (pp. 331-423 in 6th edition) ➤ "Trojan Saga" pseudo-lecture on Blackboard ➤ <u>Draft of team project due for Professor inspection</u>
24 (TH 11/13)	Continue discussion of the <i>Iliad</i>	
25 (T 11/18)		<u>Public Research Showcase Dress Rehearsal</u>
26 (TH 11/20)		<u>Public Research Showcase – Library 6th floor</u>
27 (T 11/25)		DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Team Evaluations</u> (used for grading) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign each team member a percentage score that reflects the percentage of the total group work s/he contributed to the group, in your opinion. (eg. Amy=40%) • Write each team members' two strongest points and two areas for improvement. • Report any problems or explain your side of things. ➤ Essay exam on team projects (due on Blackboard)
28 (TH 11/27)	Thanksgiving Break – NO CLASS	Eat Turkey or Tofurkey
29 (T 12/2)	Last Day of Class No final exam	Celebrate success